

GROUND RULES FOR CANVASS OBSERVERS

Observers have the right to view all canvass procedures. Operations will continue as scheduled whether or not an observer is present. Although law allows observers, there are rules and guidelines that must be followed.

ADMINISTRATION OF OBSERVERS

Appoint Spokesperson

- Observers/Representatives for each party of interest shall appoint a spokesperson for their group (if applicable).
- A different person may be appointed upon prior written notification to the Election Official.

Public Observation Area

- Window located in the Butte County Elections Office lobby area and window located outside the elections backroom.
- Public observers are expected to remain quiet while in these areas and no interruption of election functions will be permitted.

Relevant Material

- Any research, review or handling of relevant election material shall be done solely at the discretion of the Election Official. One representative of each party of interest may be present.
- Requests to research, review or handle relevant material must be received in writing and must describe what material will be researched, reviewed or handled before the official canvass is completed.

Schedule

- The canvass shall proceed according to the schedule set by the Election Official.
- Operations will continue as scheduled whether or not an observer is present.

Results

The Election Official shall establish policies related to the release of unofficial results during the canvassing process.

Security

- The Election Official shall determine the security of the ballots and election materials.
- Violation of security may cause removal of the observer from the premises.

OBSERVER GUIDELINES/PROCEDURES

Number of Observers	The number and placement of observers shall be determined by the Election Official.
Sign In Sheet	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All observers must sign in.
Badges	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Each observer will be issued a badge.
Rules	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Failure to follow observer rules will be reported to the Election Official, who will determine appropriate action.• Except to challenge a canvass procedure, observers shall not carry on conversations with each other or election personnel or make disruptive comments while in the observation or canvass work areas.• Election Official will determine and establish a reasonable observation distance.• No observers shall interfere with the orderly process of the canvass.• Observers shall not touch or handle any ballots, envelopes, containers or equipment.• Observers shall not assist in the operations of the canvass.
Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Questions concerning the specifics of the canvass process, other than challenges, are to be routed through the spokesperson who will then direct the questions to the Election Official or his/her designee.• All parties of interest shall be notified of the time for resolving questions.

CHALLENGES

How to Challenge	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rules for making and resolving challenges shall be set forth by the Election Official.• The Election Official or his/her designee shall make the ruling on all challenges and that ruling shall be final.• All parties of interest shall be notified of the time for resolving challenges.
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HOUSEKEEPING

Housekeeping Rules	<p>Housekeeping rules will be addressed by the Election Official and may include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Public telephones are located: Ground floor-center of Atrium; Second level-Administration• Restrooms are located: Ground floor-east end of Atrium; Second level-ADA compliant restroom accessible by elevator; Second level-Administration• Eating/drinking policy is: Not permitted• Radios, cameras or tape recorder policy is: Not permitted• Cell phones and pagers policy is: Not permitted• Use of office telephones and/or other office equipment: Not permitted• Campaign buttons/shirts etc: Not permitted
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POLL WATCHERS

Poll Watchers (also known as observers or campaign workers) are allowed at the polling place as long as they obey the rules set out in the California Elections Code.

A Poll Watcher may:

- ✓ Inspect the “*Roster of Voters*” or “*Master Precinct Street Index*”. Any such inspection, however, must be done without impeding, interfering or interrupting the normal process of voting and counting.
- ✓ Inspect and write down information off the Indexes posted inside the polling place without removing them from the posted location.
- ✓ Observe all activities at the polling place (including activities after the polls close) providing there is no interference with the normal process.

A Poll Watcher may not:

- ✓ Engage in any electioneering (see “ELECTIONEERING”) within 100 feet of the entrance to the polling place. This includes wearing campaign buttons, T-shirts, etc. This is a prohibited activity and will not be tolerated.
- ✓ Sit at the table used by the precinct board. Only members of the precinct board (and voters who are signing the Roster) are allowed to sit at the table used by the precinct board during the time the polls are open. Also, only members of the precinct board may sit at this table while they are in the process of closing the polls and packaging the ballots, supplies and equipment.
- ✓ Be within the immediate area of the voting booths while the polls are open.
- ✓ Remove the indexes posted at the entrance, inside the polling place.
- ✓ Disrupt or interfere with the process in any way.

If there is a Poll Watcher, observer or campaign worker who does not comply with these rules, you must inform this person that they may not continue the prohibited activity.

Be pleasant and reasonable (i.e. if there are not any voters in the polling place, and you are not using the “*Roster of Voters*” or “*Master Precinct Street Index*”, it is available for inspection).

Remember that Poll Watchers may not sit at the table or interfere with the process.

If the person argues with you or persists with the activity, either telephone the Butte County Elections Office and speak with a Supervisor or contact the appropriate police authorities directly.

Do not be intimidated by Poll Watchers, observers and campaign workers. They have been known to use false statements to intimidate precinct officers into allowing prohibited activities. If you have any questions, telephone the Butte County Elections Office and speak with a Supervisor.

Members of the Press conducting “Exit Polls” are not Poll Watchers (see “PRESS, MEDIA AND EXIT POLLS”)

(Posted at polling place and printed in the precinct officer handbook)

PRESS, MEDIA AND EXIT POLLS

Election Day is a big news day. There is always the possibility that the press will visit your polling place to get some camera footage, an interview or to conduct an “Exit Poll”.

The California Secretary of State and the Attorney General have reviewed the Electioneering provisions (see “ELECTIONEERING”) and have determined that these provisions do not apply to the Press and Media conducting “Exit Polls.” However, no one may interfere with the conduct of the election. Therefore, news media conducting “Exit Polls” have been advised to remain at least 25 feet from the entrance to the polls.

As a rule, the person conducting the “Exit Poll” has been advised of the 25-foot restriction and is more than willing to comply. Occasionally we have had problems, particularly in stormy weather. If you have any problems regarding members of the press or “Exit Polling”, call the Butte County Elections Office as soon as possible and request to speak with a Supervisor.

The Press and Media may take pictures or run a television camera inside the polling place providing they respect the voter’s privacy and do not interfere with voting. They may speak to voters regarding how they are voting at a distance of 25 feet from the entrance to the polling place.

The Press and Media provide a valuable service to our community and we ask that you treat them courteously and with respect. If you have any questions regarding the activities of the Press and Media, please telephone the Butte County Elections Office and ask to speak with a Supervisor.

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